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TAGS: KSCA TBIO OTRA EI

SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE GRANTED TO NIH/FIC DR. MERIKANGAS

REF: STATE 219516

¶1. Post welcomes and grants country clearance to Dr. Kathleen Merikangas, Senior Investigator, National Institute of Mental Health, NIH, to travel to Dublin, Ireland, from December 3 to 12, 2005. Purpose of the visit is to attend and give a presentation at the 16th International Symposium on ALS/Motor Neuron Diseases.

¶2. Per reftel, post understands that no assistance is required. Embassy telephone number while in country is (01) 668-8777 during business hours; (01) 668-9612 after hours.

GENERAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

¶3. There are no visa requirements for visitors traveling to Ireland on diplomatic or official passports.

¶4. Please note that as of March 29, 2004, Ireland has instituted a smoking ban in the work place, including all pubs, restaurants, and hotel common areas. Violations of this law may result in a fine of up to Euro 3,000. Check with hotel staff upon arrival to determine if smoking is permitted in hotel room.

¶5. Travelers may take the Dublin Aircoach (7 Euro one way, departure every 15 minutes) or a taxi (approximately 25 Euro one way) to city centre.

¶6. Accommodation Exchange: Post does not have check cashing or money changing facilities. Major credit cards are widely accepted; ATM machines accept most major U.S. bankcards, and offer the best exchange rates.

SECURITY INFORMATION FOR IRELAND

¶7. Post is unaware of direct threats against Americans or U.S. interests in Ireland, and Ireland remains a relatively safe country where anti-American sentiment is rare. For additional threat assessment information regarding Ireland, you may contact DS/DSS/ITA (Diplomatic Security's Office of Intelligence and Threat Assessment) in the State Department at 202-663-0787. TDY visitors staying longer than 30 days should schedule a briefing with the Regional Security Officer.

¶8. Street Crime: Like any large urban center, Dublin has its share of street crime, especially pick-pocketing and purse-snatching. Valuables should not be left unattended in cars and should be kept in hotel safe deposit boxes. Do not carry large amounts of cash. Violent confrontations and use of firearms are rare, however, and with reasonable precautions and common sense visitors should be able to enjoy a safe visit. Police services are excellent; the number for emergency services in Ireland is 999 or 112.

¶9. Terrorism: Ireland, like the rest of the world, shares an increased threat of terrorist incidents of international origin. Travelers should remain aware of their surroundings and report suspicious people or activities to the police or

RSO.

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Visit Dublin's Classified Website:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/dublin/index.cfm>
KENNY